

8138, and  
CONSIDERATIONS <sup>49</sup>

X. ON OUR

*National Grievances!* — 6

In a LETTER addressed to  
**JOHN TEMPEST, Esq;**  
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT;

AND THOSE WORTHY  
**F R E E H O L D E R S,**  
Who signed the PETITION for the  
County of **D U R H A M.**

Of equal Importance to ELECTORS in general.

By **FABRICIUS, Junior.**

R

NEWCASTLE

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C O N G R A F T I O N S

O N O U R

22. 10. 1855.

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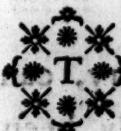
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concerning the right of self defence to my body or property to my country, or the consequences of such a proceeding.

## CONSIDERATIONS, &c.

 O POINT out the errors and follies of mankind, is not only an invidious, but a disagreeable task; yet, notwithstanding the discouragement of such an undertaking, I cannot help thinking it the duty of every honest man to oppose, by all means in his power, every measure, or system, that appears prejudicial to society: And surely when he sees the fundamental rights of his country infringed by a set of presumptuous and designing men, it then becomes more particularly incumbent upon him to give the alarm.

JAMES I

IN

INFLUENCED by these motives alone, I have at different times took up my pen in defence of the constitutional liberties of my country, and tho' my well-meant endeavours have been attended with many unpleasing, because unmerited, consequences to myself, yet I shall never regret the having done what my heart assures me is right.

PERHAPS no age, or period of history, can point out such attempts as have lately been made to subvert the laws and liberties of this country, or to discountenance every thing that is good and praise-worthy. This strange degeneracy of manners and principles, has been a work of time; for notwithstanding the natural propensity of mankind to evil, I am convinced that it is only by degrees that men are brought to the commission of atrocious crimes: The human heart never becomes corrupted all at once.

I SHALL

I SHALL endeavour to account for this flagrant perversion of morals, so far at least as it affects government, and to assign the true cause of our national disorders. Being far from the scene of public action, I may possibly be wrong in my speculations, or in the reasons I assign for that almost general corruption which has crept in amongst us, and which can only be suppressed by a virtuous and unremitting opposition to bad men, and bad measures.

I NEED carry my enquiry no further back to account for the change in our political system, than to the court of his late R. H. the Prince of *W.* where the E. of *B.* first ingratiated himself; and it required no great depth of politics in those who knew his family and principles, to foresee the dreadful effects of his growing influence. This reminds me of what a late worthy old officer once told me: He said, that one day, mentioning to his

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Colonel the dangerous illnes of the late good old King, the latter replied; " God forbid, my friend, that his Majesty should die in our time! for when he does die, Lord B. will rule this land, and he will rule it with a rod of iron;" and indeed what followed did but too fully justify the observation, or rather prediction. Brought up himself in the principles of arbitrary power, even the exemplary fate of the Stewarts was not sufficient to deter him from endeavouring to instil the same maxims into his Royal pupil: How far he has succeeded I will not pretend to say, but from the many great and good qualities of his present Majesty, I flatter myself that the pernicious designs of his teacher, will not prove so effectual as he could wish. I am told, that no man could be more fitted for the purpose of corruption: He knew how " to watch the weak hour, and ram sack all the heart;" No one knew so well to fit the mask of hypocrisy, and make it wear the appear-

pearance of virtue. He had abilities sufficient to warp the good disposition even of a *Marcus Aurelius*. That rooted ascendancy he had acquired in the court of the Prince of *W.* seemed to increase upon his present M——ty's succeeding to the regal dignity: He filled up every place of trust with creatures of his own stamp, and every measure was taken that political cunning could inspire to render his plan of power successful. My Lord *Chatham* was greatly mistaken when he said "the man wanted wisdom," for had his sycophants and dependants always acted with the same caution that he did, our ruin would have been inevitable; but the rapacity of these harpies was too eager to be satisfied by common means, and by endeavouring to grasp at every thing at once, they discovered the black designs of their leader.

Poste

Post's in the navy and army were (out of turn) given to his retainers. All the lesser offices were filled up in the same way; but as these injustices were only done to individuals who had no great power or interest, their feeble complaints, as too frequently happen, were not attended to. Blinded with power, and elated with these small successes, he now ventured upon the exertion of a much higher authority, and when any opposition was made to his measures, the old and faithful servants of the crown were not only discharged from their places, but attempts made to wrest from them those honours and emoluments, which had been acquired by the blood and valour of their ancestors.

WRITERS at this time were employed, and rewarded, for endeavouring to corrupt the morals of the people. The old exploded doctrine of non-resistance and passive obedience, was

was re-echoed from all parts, and every measure was made use of to divert the attention of the public from what was going forward at the helm. Nay, so far were matters carried, that if any one hinted a dislike of what was done by the minister, he and his family, whatever pretensions they might have, were marked out as victims of ministerial vengeance.

THESE are not bare random assertions, or the effect of any personal enmity to the Thane: The facts are recent, and too well known to be specified;—and tho' the united cries of the people at last banished the favourite from the stage of action, yet there is but too great reason to fear that he still prompts behind the scenes, as the same system has been invariably pursued by his successors. No times indeed could be more favourable to the Premier for the execution of his projects. Corruption, like a rapid torrent, seemed to bear down every thing before it.

it. We had concluded a successful war, and so laid the foundation of a peace which might have immortalized the name of *England*. Lulled with the visionary hopes of golden days to come, we little suspected what schemes were concerted for our destruction, and that while our arms had beyond example aggrandized us in the eyes of all the world, we were upon the brink of losing our very existence as a free people.

BUT whilst I accuse administration with these vile practices, I must at the same time acknowledge that we ourselves were unthinkingly accessory to our own fate. After the burthen and fatigues of a long war, the minds of the people seemed voluntarily to sink into supineness and insensibility: The repeated cries of danger from a few persons of more than ordinary vigilance and discernment, had for a long time no more effect upon us, than those

of

of Cassandra upon the infatuated Trojans. What also contributed a great deal to this change of manners amongst us, was the introduction of Eastern riches, and Eastern luxury; and tho' our constitution is better formed for duration than that of the *Roman state*, yet will luxury have the same temporary effect at least upon us that it used to have upon them.

**T**HE landed property has almost changed hands: During the late war the weight and support of government lay chiefly upon the landed part of the nation, and many gentlemen of small fortunes, from those, and such like causes, were obliged to sell their estates. Others again, to save appearances, and keep pace with the extravagance of the times, had recourse to gaming, to the ruin of themselves and families: Nor did government itself scruple to shew the example of this worst of vices, by giving such enormous prizes in the lottery. To so scan-

dalous a pitch has gaming and dissipation arrived, that I am told the late Premier has not blushed to put off the business of the nation to attend *Newmarket*, or a masquerade.

I HAVE have here only superficially run over the crimes of the minister, and the corruption of the times, having neither leisure nor materials for so copious a subject. We have, however, as yet escaped the disaster that threatened us: Nothing could have saved us from perdition but the best planned system of government that human wisdom ever invented; tho' it is still necessary to keep the most watchful eye upon our liberties, for the grievances complained of, so far from abating, seem in many instances to have increased. A timely opposition has indeed shewed itself in many parts of the kingdom, but our just complaints, owing to the unhappy influence that still prevails, have been rejected with disdain. Let us however not be

dif-

discouraged. The Hydra of Despotism can only be overcome by a virtuous and steady perseverance: The times require it of us; and I hope that no man, who has engaged in defence of the liberties of his country, will dastardly withdraw himself for any ill success he may have met with, or the appearance of danger. The deep-laid plan of our enemies cannot be overturned in a day. The corruption of the people can only be cured by the good example of their superiors: This is the most speedy remedy; for the precepts of divines or other teachers, work by slow and almost imperceptible degrees; the former remedy I will venture to say is more quick and efficacious.

THE corruption of the people, and the ill effects of mal-administration, are so nearly connected, that I could not mention the one without taking notice of the other: Indeed my plan required it, to shew how easy it is for ill-designing

Signs men, in the times of depravity, to defeat  
 the purposes of the best of governments. The  
 cure of the body politic, as I before observed,  
 entirely depends upon a steady and virtuous  
 opposition, in all ranks, to bad men and bad  
 measures. It is not now a time to stand neuter  
 and inactive, and none but the ignorant, the  
 selfish, or the pusillanimous will do so. We  
 are upon a troubled sea, and every hand must  
 be employed to save us from shipwreck. Happily  
 for this country there are some in both  
 Houses of Parliament, who have manfully  
 stemmed the tide of state corruption, who were  
 not to be dazzled by the sun-shine of a court,  
 or deluded by the promises or hopes of a re-  
 ward: They generously preferred the interest  
 of their country to the tarnished honors and  
 titles of a long list of prostituted names.  
 But until there is a proper representation of the  
 people in the House of Commons, these patri-  
 otic efforts will answer little purpose: Whilst  
 going  
 men,

men, contrary to the ancient mode of Parliament, are sure of their seats for seven years, our liberties are far from being safe in such hands.

WHEN P——t made themselves septennial Representatives of the people, I will not scruple to say, that it was an infringement upon the Rights of their C——ns—ents; and after what has lately happened, I should not at all be surprised if the present *uncorrupted* H. of Commons should declare, that their representation was not for seven, but seventeen years. If you cannot get quit of that swarm of place-men and pensioners that infest the House, and procure triennial Parliaments, there will be little hopes of a change for the better. For my own part I do not see the impropriety at a future election for the E——rs to declare, that they only empower their M——rs to represent them for three years; certainly they have a right

right to do this; and if, after that term is elapsed, the House should venture to make any declaration to the contrary, I apprehend that the P—ple may then legally proceed to a second choice, and not suffer their Re——t—s to assume to themselves a right which is only inherent in the collective body of the people.

I HAVE here only drawn a hasty and imperfect sketch of that particular influence which has already endangered and threatens the utter subversion of our constitution; for to enter into particulars, or to refer to facts as they happened, would fill up a volume instead of a letter. I only mean to urge you to that attention which the precarious situation of your liberty demands, and which, if neglected, will bring inevitable ruin upon yourselves, and your posterity. Your own safety, the honour and dignity of the nation, call upon you to exert your utmost endeavours to repel the iniquitous attacks

attacks of those men, who, from the most base and venal motives, are aiming at your exclusion from all share in legislation. The eyes of all those honest Freeholders who signed the petition for this county, are particularly fixed upon you, Sir, to whom this letter is principally addressed. The cool, steady, and honourable part you took in the last Sessions of Parliament, makes them distinguish you as one of the Guardians of their Liberties; and I flatter myself that you will join with your friends in an unwearied perseverance, and be determined, in conjunction with them, to avail yourself of every constitutional method for redressing our present accumulated grievances. This is what is expected of you, and in this I hope we shall not be deceived.

Sept, 15, 1770,

*FABRICIUS, Jun.*

strokes of those men, who from the most past  
and recent motives, are aiming at your excus-  
ing from all the blame in legislation. The case of  
all those persons Freeholders who judge the  
bestion for this country, the politicians fixed  
upon you, sir, to whom this letter is addressed  
affectionately. The cool, steady, and forcible style  
you took in the last Session of Parliament  
makes them difficultly you as one of the  
castigates of their Tipplers; and I trust they  
will this year will join with you in the  
unwilling believers, say no determined  
in accordance with them, to save you  
from a constitutional meeting for redressing our  
present accumulated grievances. This is what  
is expected of you, and in this I hope we shall

not be deceived.



July 12 1773

John